

City of Santa Barbara
COVID-19 Business Advisory Task Force
July 31, 2020 Meeting Summary

- The majority of the Business Advisory Task Force members were able to join and participate in the meeting with City staff.
- Mayor Murillo opened the meeting with a welcome and provided an update on the City Council's action to support the County's request to the Governor to create a Central Coast region and be excluded from the Southern California region. The Mayor expressed the frustration of her colleagues with the stay at home's order impact on the business community and the general fear in the community.
- City Administrator Paul Casey provided an update on the stay at home order, actions of the State and County, and the ongoing economic impact to the economy and City's revenues. He referenced the Council's support to extend the economic recovery ordinance until March 8, and will be requesting to it extend further. He also spoke of the ongoing efforts to oversee the parklet program, and efforts to envision the future of State Street.
- There were a number of questions and updates from task force members regarding the current stay at home order, hope that the State recognizes the Central Coast region and removes the County from the stay at home order on December 28. There was an update on the lodging and hospitality industry efforts to lobby State officials. There was a warning given on an increase of worker compensation claims regarding COVID infections at the workplace and a reminder that businesses need to closely adhere to the public health operating requirements. Others referenced the need to support local retailers with a "shop local" campaign, suggested the creation of a financial assistance campaign like San Luis Obispo, and emphasized the need to lobby federal representatives to ensure passage of the federal assistance package. A task force member gave an update on the continued impact to commercial real estate for office and retail tenants and low number of transactions. Another task force member questioned the possibility of Council revisiting the eviction moratorium. Overall, the group shared thoughts on the need to diligently monitor economic conditions, stressing that business assistance is needed.
- Nancy Anderson with the County gave an update on the County's ongoing outreach efforts to meet and inform businesses about the Public Health orders. She also provided details about the County's request and letter to the Governor to seek State recognition of a Central Coast region and removal of Santa Barbara County from the Southern California region. She also referenced the dynamic changes to Public Health metrics and hospital capacity, which showed that case counts were rising due to the Thanksgiving holiday. Ms. Anderson stated that they are anticipating requests for medical assistance from harder hit counties in California.